

STATEMENT TO CHAIRMAN YURI ANDROPOV  
BY  
SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY

August 18, 1983

Mr. Chairman, I have come to Moscow for one overriding purpose: to underline my deep and growing concern that the arms control process is in jeopardy.

Perhaps you know that my colleagues and I are strong advocates of verifiable arms control between the United States and the Soviet Union. I supported the SALT II Treaty, and I earnestly hope the Geneva negotiations will soon lead to equitable agreements.

However, in all frankness, I must tell you that questionable Soviet activity regarding existing formal and informal arms agreements is causing me increasing concern. Although there are important issues relating to the possible use of chemical weapons in Afghanistan and Southeast Asia, my main concerns at this meeting are about the unratified SALT II Treaty which both sides say they will observe, and the Anti Ballistic Missile Treaty.

I am worried by reports that the Soviet Union is testing two new intercontinental ballistic missiles, when the SALT II Treaty permits only one. Perhaps even more worrisome for the future of verifiable arms control is the level of encryption of telemetry from Soviet strategic missile tests. Access to telemetry is necessary to verify compliance with important provisions of SALT II, as well as any future treaty with qualitative limitations. Recently, there have also been press reports of the construction in the Soviet Union of a large phased-array radar in a location which could be inconsistent with the ABM Treaty.

Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to debate these matters. My intention is to explain to you the widening distress among all members of the United States Senate, Republican and Democrat, regarding your country's activities. Arms control supporters like myself can't defend the arms control process when Soviet behavior raises legitimate questions which remain unanswered.

Not only may the political basis for American observance of SALT II thus be weakened, a climate is being created which will make Senate approval of any future arms agreement much more difficult. For the United States to ratify any treaty, two-thirds of the 100 senators must agree. Whether they do or not will depend mainly on the past Soviet arms control record.

There may be valid explanations for all these activities. As one who firmly believes mutual, verifiable arms reductions and limitations are good for both our countries, I urge you to resolve our concerns. This would immeasurably strengthen those in the United States who are convinced that arms control can reduce the terrible threat to our peoples of a nuclear catastrophe.

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